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ment. This section describes the methods of securing the principal raw materials—berries, brush, water, wood, game, fish, fur, and garden produce.

Collecting. Berries, moss, spruce brush, spruce gum, and eggs are collected. In summer the tops of the wild onion plant may be pulled for use in soup, and a parsnip-like tuber is sometimes dug. Most berry picking occurs in late summer, but girls may still pick a few high bush cranberries while visiting the rabbit lines in early winter. When women and girls return to camp with berries, they may offer a share to women who did not participate in the picking. Men will often stop while traveling to pick from an abundant supply of blueberries or low bush cranberries.

Moss is pulled from the ground and piled in a small piece of canvas which is folded together for transportation. In winter the woman scrapes away the snow with her hands or snowshoes and uses an ax to chop out a frozen area of moss. After the moss is dried out it is used to pad children's diaper cloths. When used to chink log cabins, moss is not dried. Spruce brush for use as a camp floor is cut by the women. A number of small trees may be dragged into camp and then trimmed. More rarely, a little brush is obtained by cutting away the lower branches of a standing tree. Spruce gum is peeled off a red spruce tree in the course of traveling and chewed immediately. In June or July a hunter occasionally finds the eggs of spruce hens or willow grouse. The eggs are gently shaken or tapped to ascertain if there is a young bird inside; should this be the case, they are said to be returned to the nest.

Water is obtained from rivers, streams, and lakes in one or two quart covered cooking vessels by the women. In winter the ice of the river is chopped through and this must be done several times a day or else the hole will soon freeze over again. Snow may be melted to secure water. Stagnant marsh water is avoided whenever a better source of running water is not too far distant.

Collecting wood for fuel is time consuming in the winter season. An open camp fire in summer or fall imposes relatively little effort as far as fuel gathering is concerned. Most families wait till twilight to gather a large enough supply of poles to keep the fire going until bedtime. In winter, gathering fuel for an open fire is more laborious, since enough wood has to be collected to provide heat till morning. Except for rotten spruce wood used in smoking hides, it is ideally the man's task to bring wood into camp. In practice, however, women and girls assist. Keeping a stove going in winter requires so much fuel that it is not possible to rely on the supply of dead wood lying around a settlement. Therefore, in order to insure an adequate winter wood supply for a settlement, sufficient trees must be dried two or more years in advance. Two methods are used for drying trees, burning and girdling. In the former procedure, small tracts of timber are fired when the wind is right. The fire kills the trees and in a year or so the wood is dry enough for fuel. More often red spruce trees, from six to twenty inches in diameter, are girdled. This process will dry a tree in about two years. Jackpine is sometimes dried by felling a number of trees, cleaning off the limbs, and then stacking the poles upright against a clump of willows to dry. In about three years this wood will be thoroughly dry, although half-dry jackpine is used in open fires and green jackpine is burned in heaters. A sufficient amount of wood is rarely cut to last more than a short time. Each spring there is usually a severe shortage of wood, and any deadwood lying around the settlement, including discarded artifacts, is utilized for heat.

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221 nated" in firmly built dwellings and subsisted on fish. Around the turn of the year "young fellows" set out to obtain dried meat from the caches which in some instances might be located 30 or more miles away. For most of the people winter remained a period of limited mobility and relaxed social intercourse. Sometimes, however, fishing failed and then the meat caches were quickly depleted. If fresh fishing sites proved equally unproductive the groups sought to make contact with another band, one that had been more fortunate in finding food. At such times men climbed to high places and scanned the horizons for smoke which in winter would be visible for long distances. Often it must have happened that all the neighbors in a tribal territory found themselves short of food, perhaps due to the cyclic fluctuation of the animal population. In such years, again like the other animals, the human population of the Cassiar also shrank. Thus a balance was kept between the people and the environment's resources. With the lengthening days of spring, the snow crusted and there came another favorable time to pursue game. Now beaver provided an important source of food, the people separating to travel to family-owned beaver creeks. Upon the break-up of the river ice the beaver and muskrat quit their dwellings to travel. That served as a cue for the Indians to build or recover canoes. Then once more they reassembled around a fish lake, where the hot summer was passed renewing friendships. This is a brief summary of the food quest and annual cycle, whose routines remain to be described in greater detail. The focus of the cycle was on food. One informant clearly recognized this when he remarked, "Old timers thought about nothing—just something to eat."

805 In the calendar of the community one sees more specifically the relationship between the people and environment, as well as the note taken of the seasonal changes. The year was divided as follows:

kliʔulaɣesa (January)—"dog burning moon." The term refers to the intense cold which caused dogs to get too close to the fire so that they sometimes burned themselves.

kaʔoɣasesa (February)—"rabbit eating moon" (0). Also taɣadasa, "cold tree moon" (X).

atasa (March)—"eagle coming moon" (0). Also called atikasa, "moon when everything [i.e., game] comes to this country" (X).

tatanasa (April)—"snow crusts moon" (0). Also tikasa, "everything here moon" (X).

A reference for the period corresponding to May could not be obtained.

ayesesa (June)—"egg moon."

skatsunsin (July)—"game moults moon."

atosanasa (August)—"fat game moon" (0) or etdigasa, "everything ready, everything fat moon" (X).

atoditelisa (September)—"leaves color moon."

ʔustelisa (October)—"female ground hog moon."

natinitsilsa (November)—"little finger moon." So called because "its soft, everything is cool and yet not too cold."

tinitcosa (December)—"Christmas (?) moon."

●222 824 262 The Indians secured food through gathering, trapping, hunting, and fishing. Girls and women did the principal collecting, although men also sought vegetable products in the course of walking through a favorable area while hunting. Berries were the main items sought by collectors and included, in approximate order of frequency, the soap berry, high- and low-bush cranberry, salmon berry, raspberry, strawberry, currant, and

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blueberry. Other vegetable products taken from the land included fern roots in spring; lily bulbs; mushrooms, frequently stolen from a squirrel's cache; muskeg apples, that grew up in the mountains and were described as tasting somewhat like turnips; wild onions, of which only the greens were eaten; rose petals, made into a beverage by boiling; and wild rhubarb. Both sexes chewed gum taken from a "half dead" spruce tree, a choice advised by the fact that such gum would not stick to the teeth. Jackpine and spruce fibers were also eaten but mud, birch fiber, willow buds, wild rice, and wild peas held no place in the diet. Birch sap, obtained by tapping the birch in spring, ranked as a minor delicacy but people ignored poplar sap. Children kept the camp supplied with water, securing it from the river or in the form of snow. Warmed moose milk was sometimes drunk.

Flesh food could be secured with the least expenditure of energy by setting traps, including snares, deadfalls, nets, and, perhaps, pitfalls. For bear the Indian located a snare made of braided babiche (as many as eight strands of semi-tanned skin line might be used) near a berry patch, while for moose and caribou he placed similar snares between trees and across the runways which those animals had made in the course of visiting drinking places and salt licks. Fences were sometimes extended from either side of a moose or caribou snare. At other times trappers thrust two forked poles into the ground and across them suspended a toggle pole twelve feet long and three inches in diameter. From the toggle hung a caribou snare while on either side a fence directed the animal into the trap. Men always set moose and caribou snares. "Even if a woman knew how to make a caribou snare she could not make it good enough." For lynx a semicircle of poles with a center opening for the snare was anchored in the ground. A single strand of babiche had sufficient strength to hold this animal. Such snares might be erected by women. In mountain gulches through which ran sheep trails men erected free toggle snares for sheep. Often the poles used in this work had to be packed long distances above timberline. Up to six strands of babiche were twisted together to make a snare line strong enough for that animal. For beaver, men (and also women) set snares of three-strand twisted babiche near a dam.

Ground hog snares featured a rock toggle and required two-strand twisted babiche. The family provided itself with a number of six- or seven-foot long forked poles in the fall and packed these above the timberline. The trapper firmly planted one such pole for each snare in a rock cairn near a ground hog den. On either side of the pole ran a small fence about a foot high. After forming the snare loop between these fences, the snare line was bent and knotted around a small trigger stick before continuing through the fork of the pole. Halfway below the fork the line was weighted with a 20-pound rock. The trigger stick was fitted under a convenient knob or protuberance on the upright pole, the toggle's weight serving to keep it fixed until an animal entered the snare and dislodged the stick, whereupon the rock fell to the ground. The weight of the falling toggle lifted the animal off the earth. In timbered areas lifting-pole snares like those frequently used for rabbits were also set for ground hog. In fact, the rock toggle appears to represent an adaptation of the lifting-pole principle to treeless country. Men, boys, and women built ground hog snares.

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Dease River

said the custom obtained among the Fort Liard Indians. It would seem as though the "half-cool" food ritual among the Upper Liard Indians constituted a local variation of the hot-food test pattern. Unless meat was scarce, a man entertained without his family always received enough food to bring some home to his wife. Gormandizing was somewhat uncertainly denied, informants stating that a tendency to vomit could be inhibited by spitting on one's knife scabbard.

Dease River Kaska. When the environment signaled the arrival of autumn the Dease River people began their movement into the mountains in search of meat to dry and preserve for winter consumption. With the onset of cold weather several families rejoined around some "low place" to fish and here they spent the bulk of the winter. In summer too the people camped in a large body near a good fishing site along a lake or river. Previous to assembling, word traveled between the bands designating the meeting place.

The periods of the year are revealed in the following calendar:

cinta (January)—"pretty near long day moon."
sanawsa (February)—"pretty near middle of the winter moon."
detcinsa (March)—"stick [i.e., timber] moon."
atatcosa (April)—"big eagle flies moon."
tsaatsa (May)—"long day moon."
tsailesa (June)—"pretty near change to summer moon."
tanicitcosa (July)—"middle moon."
tanicicitlesa (August)—"year pretty near gone moon."
tcunuetsa (September)—"pretty soon snow coming moon."
nugecsa (October)—"snow comes moon."
tanasa (November)—"pretty near change winter moon."
makasa (December)—"pretty near short day moon."

The calendar reveals the interest with which the Indians looked forward to the long daylight of spring and early summer; how autumn warned of winter, snow, and the aging year; and how the shortest day of the year provided a landmark for reckoning time.

Food had to be secured in all seasons. In summer and fall women and girls sought blueberries, low bush cranberries, strawberries, raspberries, salmon berries, soap berries, and currants. With the aid of a digging stick women as well as men dug for wild carrots. People also collected onion greens, rose petals, spruce and birch fibers, willow buds, and spruce gum, but not wild rice or mushrooms. Goose eggs were welcomed in their season. Water, birch sap, and rose petals steeped in water furnished the main beverages.

In summer and winter traps caught wild animals for food. Bear, caribou, moose, and sheep were snared with four- or five-strand braided babiche line. In the case of caribou and moose the trapper extended fences from either side of his snare, such barriers consisting of poles lashed to trees and piled with brush. Deadfalls took bear, marten, beaver and smaller animals. Pitfalls found no place in the technology. Sometimes the Indians drove caribou and mountain sheep into surrounds where they could be shot or where they might trap themselves in snares. Sheep surrounds were built on relatively low

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Tselona

to the other, crowned such a structure. Families also utilized simpler platform caches, the food on these being covered with brush or bark held in place with heavy logs.

Women cooked on occasions when the family ate as a unit. Food was served on bark dishes or in wooden bowls. Spoons of sheep or caribou horn facilitated eating. People took meals twice a day, morning and night, both sexes as well as children eating together. An informant denied gormandizing, remarking that the people knew very well when to cease eating.

Tselona. The fat game in the high country attracted the families in autumn. With the onset of winter the bands descended to a fish lake, from which the men went out to fetch meat from caches, hauling back the food on skin toboggans. Often only two families spent the winter together at a fishing site—two brothers and their wives and children or about ten people in all. Summer sent the hunters to set snares for moose and goats. All summer the men "kept on the move," following game. The usual vegetable foods were gathered by women, including blueberries, low bush cranberries, strawberries, raspberries, currants, and soap berries. The latter berries were never mixed with grease because the berries would "smell" the grease and "settle down again, not make soap." In other words, they would not froth as they did when mashed with water.[10] People ate lily bulbs raw as well as cooked. Bark vessels served to catch birch and poplar sap for drinking. Both sexes chewed spruce gum but geophagy remained unpracticed. Spruce, birch, and jackpine fibers, peeled with a knife, were eaten raw, as was wild rhubarb which, however, people took pains to "skin." Wild onions were cooked with meat. The informant denied any use of willow buds and wild rice for food, the latter being unrecognized in this area. Two varieties of muskeg tea were sought by gatherers, the stems and leaves of both types being boiled. The species could be identified only as tas?luse and dimasket.

Our informant confidently stated that moose had always populated the country of the Tselona but denied the presence of elk, wood buffalo, and mountain sheep. Moose were snared and also hunted with the bow, the hunter relying on semicircular tracking to approach within close range of his prey. In season the moose might be called with a dried moose scapula. No custom of removing moccasins while tracking game could be recalled. Sometimes a line of men moving forward in concerted action drove a moose toward a series of snares. Caribou were also caught in snares, and skin decoys further assisted in the hunting of that animal. A hunter who wanted to kill a bear when it was summer, sought to surprise the animal in a berry patch, shooting it first with an arrow and then finishing it off with a lance bearing a caribou-horn point. In winter men obtained bears by shooting them while in a den or by thrusting lances into the lair. Sometimes a smoke fire served to drive the animal out of its winter dwelling. Lances also aided in killing beaver in the spring. A porcupine could easily be clubbed to death but in winter had first to be smoked out of its house. No taboo forbade the clubbing of any animal. Following the introduction of dogs, people employed them to track game. Other

[10] Yet Pike reports the coastal tribes to pound soap berries "till a thick froth, much resembling soap bubbles, gathers. . . . this froth, with a judicious mixture of salmon oil—or, better still, seal oil—they consider one of the things worth living for." Pike, *Through the Subarctic Forest* (1896), 35–36.